

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6-8, 10-14, 17-34, 36-39, and 41-43 are pending in this case.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Mori et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,995,802, herein "Mori") in view of Nagata et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,321,477, herein "Nagata"). Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Mori in view of Nagata and further in view of Noguchi et al. (Japanese Patent Publication No. 10-260590). Claims 12 and 14 were objected to as dependent on a rejected base claim, but otherwise were indicated as including allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent form. Claims 1-4, 6-8, 17-34, 36-39, and 41-43 are allowed.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of Claims 1-4, 6-8, 17-34, 36-39, and 41-43 and the indication that Claims 12 and 14 include allowable subject matter.

The rejection of Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Mori in view of Nagata is respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 10 recites a device for driving an endless belt comprising, *inter alia*, "a stationary guide body adjoining said drive roller and continuously contacting the belt at a side where said rotary body is positioned."

Nagata discloses an image forming apparatus including a belt 10 and a plurality of guides 55 configured to press paper 9 against belt 10 as paper 9 passes beneath the guides while moving along the belt.¹ Thus, guides 55 only *intermittently* contact belt 10, as paper 9 separates guides 55 from belt 10 when paper 9 passes beneath guides 55. In fact, Nagata

¹See Nagata, column 18, lines 23-64 and Figure 18.

explicitly teaches that guides 55 are worn down due to contact with paper 9.² Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Nagata teaches that guides 55 are *not continuously contacting* the belt 10. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that Nagata does not teach or suggest a stationary guide body adjoining the drive roller and continuously contacting the belt at a side where the rotary body is positioned, as recited in Claim 10.


Since Mori and Nagase do not teach or suggest, alone or in combination, each and every element of Claim 10, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 10 is patentable thereover.

Claims 11-14 are dependent from Claim 10, which applicant respectfully submits is patentable. Thus, Claims 11-14 are also believed to be patentable.

Accordingly, the outstanding rejections are traversed and the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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²Nagata, column 18, line 65 to column 19, line 9.